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Rural District Council of Maidstone

Annual Report for the Year
1955

ON


THE HEALTH OF THE
MAIDSTONE RURAL DISTRICT

BY THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

P. JACOB GAFFIKIN,

M.C., M.D., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.



MAIDSTONE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1955,

ON

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BY THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

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Maidstone Rural District Council

Public Health Committee

Chairman

Colonel Sir George W. Heron, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O.

Members.

Mr. H. W. Busbridge	Major De S. H. Lewis-Barned. M.C.
Mr. R. A. Coates	Mr. E. L. Manwaring.
Mr. J. Day	Mr. W. Moore.
Mr. W. Day	Mr. P. Morphett.
Mr. F. W. Grout.	Major E. W. Tassell, M.C., T.D.
Mrs. N. D. Herbert.	Mr. W. Tipples.

Public Health Officers of the Rural District Council

Medical Officer of Health.

P. Jacob Gaffikin, M.C., M.D., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

Senior Sanitary Inspector.

D. T. Sedgwick, A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.,
Sanitary Inspectors' Certificate.

Additional Sanitary Inspector.

K. T. Jolley, M.R.S.H., M.S.I.A., A.M.I.P.H.E.
Sanitary Inspectors' Certificate: Certificate
of Inspector of Meat and Other Foods.

Clerk to Department.

Miss B. Payne.

Maidstone Rural District

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To:- The Chairman and Members of the Maidstone Rural District Council.
Mr. Chairman, Madam & Gentlemen,

I have the Honour to present to you my Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Condition of the Maidstone Rural District, for the Year ended 31st December, 1955.

The Maidstone Rural District is, in the main, an agricultural area and this vital industry has been flourishing during the year. Improved transport and the natural attractions of the Kentish countryside have resulted in a certain infiltration of former town-dwellers into the rural areas, but this is all to the good, leading as it does, to a demand for improved standards of living and better amenities for the wives and children of agricultural workers, without which the drain of population to the towns cannot be restrained.

During 1955, the extension of main water supplies to all parts of the Rural District has been completed with the provision of main water supply for the Hunton Top area. Housing has progressed and the demolition of unfit houses and the improvement of such properties as can be dealt with in this manner, has been continued. The natural sequel of the provision of main water supplies, with the accompanying water closets and baths, which an older generation would have regarded as luxuries, is that efficient drainage, sewerage and sewage disposal, are the more necessary and desirable. Such provision is needed in several parishes of the Rural District and proposals for main drainage and sewage disposal works have been in hand for a long time, but unfortunately no progress appears to have been possible. In the fight for public health, as in other kinds of campaign, the saying of the Laird of Bradwardine in "Waverley" still obtains, "I have always found the sinews of war harder to come by than the blood or the bones".

During 1955, the health of the Rural District has, on the whole, been good, though there were a considerable number of cases of whooping-cough and 1955 was a "Measles Year" when, as seems to happen in cycles, the incidence of this disease rises, with the presence in the community of a large number of susceptible children. Two cases of anterior poliomyelitis were notified, both of which recovered. For 1955, the infantile death-rate is lower than for 1954, and again I am happy to record a maternal mortality rate of "Nil".

The encampments for hop-pickers were again visited by a Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health, who expressed satisfaction with what we were able to show him in a limited time, but the annual number of pickers coming into the District is decreasing and the advent of the picking machine seems likely to be the beginning of the end of this annual invasion of Kent from London. While some may feel regret at this, it will be appreciated that your Officers of the Health Department will also feel some relief.

I would again express my thanks to the Council and to the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee for their continued support and encouragement and to your Officers for their co-operation and assistance, and,

I have the Honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

P. Jacob Gaffikin,

Medical Officer of Health



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Section "A".

Statistics and Social Conditions of the area.

Area	34487 acres
Estimated resident population, 1955 ..	18,620
Number of inhabited houses, (according to rate books) at end of 1955.. ..	5,950
Rateable value.. .. .	£111,468
Sum represented by a penny rate	£435

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

Live births	Total	Male	Female
Legitimate	264	116	148
Illegitimate.. .. .	13	10	3
Total	277	126	151

Birth rate, per 1,000 of the estimated resident population Crude 14.87
Corrected 15.76

Still births 4

Rate per 1,000 births (live & still) 14.23

Deaths.

Deaths from all causes. Total 367 Male 195 Female 172

Death rate per 1,000 population Crude 19.71
Corrected 15.37

Deaths from puerperal causes
(Headings of Registrar-General's short list)
30,- Pregnancy, Childbirth, abortion)

Rate per 1,000 total births NIL

Death rate of infants under 1 year of age.

All infants, per 1,000 live births 32.49

Legitimate infants, per 1,000 live births.. 26.51

Illegitimate infants, per 1,000 illegitimate births 153.84

Deaths from measles, (all ages) nil

Deaths from Cancer, (all ages) 65

Cancer death rate per 1,000 estimated resident population 3.49

Deaths from Whooping-cough (all ages) nil

Deaths from Diarrhoea, (under 2 years) 2

Section "B".

General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

The Local Authorities, such as the Rural District Council, and the Borough and Urban District Councils are responsible for the environmental aspects of health services and the details given in the following pages will show the work that has been done in the past year in the safeguarding of the public health in your district. Water supplies are derived from the sources belonging to the Water Companies, but careful watch is kept on the results of examination of samples. Sewerage and sewage disposal, and the prevention of pollution of rivers and streams, are still the concern of the District Councils, as are also the inspection and supervision of meat and food of all kinds. In the measures for the control of disease, the Local Authority and its Officers form the link between the clinical services, the laboratory workers and the environmental and social agencies which are all concerned in the cure and prevention of sickness. In all these activities, the Local Authority, such as a Rural District Council, has the advantage of local knowledge, local enthusiasm and local pride, which no centralised organisation can possess, and for increased efficiency and economy, I am still convinced that delegation of the day-to-day administration of the public health services to the smaller local Authorities, with general direction and policy guidance from the centre, is most desirable.

Section "C".

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supplies. In my Report for 1954, I enumerated the Water Companies which are the suppliers of main water in the Rural District. Supplies during 1955 have been adequate, the water is of a high standard of chemical and bacteriological purity and there is no evidence of plumbo-solvent action. The Maidstone Water Company, which supplies part of the Rural District, has in hand new borings at Hocker's Lane, Detling, and a new reservoir at Detling on the Pilgrims' Way, which will give a very much increased supply. During the year, the mains supply to the Hunton Hilltop area was completed and this addition ensures that all parishes in the Rural District now have a main water supply, and the only outstanding properties without main water are on individual sites to which by reason of contours or on account of the cost involved, it is not practicable to bring the main water supply. Unfortunately, the wells and springs, on which the properties which still are without main water have to depend are in many cases unsatisfactory and cannot be entirely trusted to give a safe supply.

Scavenging. In the Maidstone Rural District, this service is in the care of the Surveyor, and regular and adequate collections are made. There is far too large an amount of litter and rubbish left to disfigure the countryside and the public conscience needs to be constantly jolted. I recently saw in Denmark a system which might be adopted here, by which every "Lay-by" on the roads has a small incinerator of stout steel bars, where papers and rubbish are deposited and burnt before the road travellers move on.

Drainage and Sewerage. During the year, some extensions of sewers and sewage disposal works were made, but the inception of the combined scheme for Teston and Watlington is still delayed. Most of the houses in the Rural District are equipped with water closets discharging into cesspits or with pail closets and the emptying of the cesspits and the disposal of the contents are also controlled by the Surveyor. The emptying of cesspits is an expensive procedure and the expense mounts steadily. Likewise, the dumping of rubbish is a wasteful and unsatisfactory proceeding. The work which has been done in some areas, notably Edinburgh, by which sewage sludge and household refuse are pulverised and digested to make fertiliser is of much interest. The plant for this process would be beyond the resources of such an Authority as a Rural District Council, but this would appear to be one direction in which co-operation between a group of Authorities would be possible and of value.

Rivers & Streams. The rivers and streams in the District are still subject to pollution, and the need for extension of main drainage and the provision of adequate means of sewage purification is still urgent. Existing sewage works are overloaded and measures to ensure that effluents are satisfactory are necessary to ensure that the rivers and streams in the County are protected.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area. During the year an increased number of inspections, was made. Housing and general visits under the Housing Acts have increased: Slaughterhouse and meat inspections are slightly lower than in 1954, and the inspections in connection with water supplies have almost doubled. Inspections under the Shops Act have increased during the year, following the delegation of further powers by the County Council. Your Senior Public Health Inspector, to give him his new title, has furnished the following report on the work of his Department during the year.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS

HOUSING

Number of houses surveyed	...	...	...	373
Number of revisits to houses	...	...	...	378
Number of drains inspected	...	...	...	368
Number of revisits to drains.	...	...	...	521
Visits re. overcrowding	...	...	...	8
Number of visits made under Housing Acts			...	768

FOOD AND WATER

Number of Slaughterhouse and Meat inspections			...	283
Number of visits re. Water Supplies	...		...	154
Number of visits re. Milk & Dairies	...		...	99
Number of visits re. Food & Drugs Act	217

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Number of visits re. infectious disease	31
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GENERAL

Accumulations	69
Keeping of animals	10
House Vans and Camping Sites	81
Hop-pickers camps	...	...	...	...	298
Factories Act	...	...	...	...	79
Shops Act	...	...	...	...	226
Rodent Control	...	...	...	...	230
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	156

Total - 4,349

GENERAL STATISTICS

NOTICES.

Informal notices served	...	...	...	69
Informal notices completed during 1955	...	...	...	68

HOUSING DEFECTS DEALT WITH BY INFORMAL NOTICES.

Walls and ceilings repaired	...	...	...	41
Ceiling joists and other timbers repaired			...	11
Walls repointed	...	...	...	4
Dampness remedied	...	...	...	35
External rendering	...	...	...	2
Provision of a Damp Proof Course		...	...	1
Replace broken sashcords	...	...	...	9
Repairs to defective windows or doors	...	...	...	16
Fillets to chimney stacks repaired		...	...	2
Chimney stacks repaired	...	...	...	8
Refix loose, slipped or missing roof tiles			...	8
General repairs to roof	...	...	...	10
Repairs to defective treads or risers to staircase				1
Insanitary condition of sinks		...	...	1
Provision of permanent ventilation		...	...	5
Provision of piped water	...	...	...	8
Repairs to external paving	...	...	...	4
Undertaking not to re-let	...	...	...	5
Fire precaution Certificate	...	...	...	1
Cooking facilities repaired	...	...	...	2
Smoke nuisance abated	...	...	...	1
Provision of sinks	...	...	...	3

DRAINAGE

Overflowing cesspools reported	...	...	16
Replacement of guttering	...	...	6
Repairs to rainwater downpipes	...	...	-
Defective drains repaired	...	...	2
Repairs to defective cesspools	...	...	4
Insanitary condition of closets	...	...	12
Repairs to gulleys	...	...	1
Choked drains	...	...	2
Repair to broken wastepipes	...	...	4
Flushing cistern to w.c.	...	...	10
Soakaway repairs	...	...	3
Overflow pipes repaired	...	...	2

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Visits made by inspector	...	...	...	31
Reports to M.O.H. on cases of infectious disease				
Scarlet Fever	...	...	10	
Food Poisoning	...	...	3	
Dysentery	...	...	3	
Typhoid	...	...	8	
Poliomyelitis	...	...	6	
Tuberculosis	...	...	1	
Total -			31	31

SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Number of licenced slaughterhouses	...	...	6
Number of premises cleansed during the year	...	...	6
Number of inspections	...	...	29

The service of statutory notices has not proved necessary in any case during the year, and the employment of formal preliminary notices has been sufficient to secure that requisite works have been completed or put in hand. Of such formal preliminary notices, 69 were served and 68 have been complied with, but this is not to be taken as indicating that all the notices save one served in 1955 have been complied with, as the 68 completions include works outstanding on notices served in 1954.

In the summary of inspections, there will be noted a heading "Miscellaneous" which amounts to a total of 156. These include 22 visits for dealing with insect infestation, such as fleas, flies, beetles; three were in connection with nuisance arising from the keeping of dogs, 45 were items not connected with the Health Department and the remaining 85 inspection visits had to be recorded as "No access". The Inspector must visit when the householder is available and on many occasions, this visit is fruitless as there is no one to be found at home, but as these "No access" visits only amount to 2% of the total inspections in the year, it will be appreciated that there is no great waste of the Inspectors' time from this cause.

FACTORIES AND WORK PLACES

The following figures show the number of inspections made of Factories, Workshops, and other premises of employment, excluding shops. It shows where defects were found, and the action necessary to abate these defects.

Premises	No.	Inspections.	Notices served.	Notices complied with	Statutory Notices
Factories with mechanical power.	13	12	2	2	-
Factories without mechanical power.	79	63	10	10	-
Other premises	5	5	1	1	-
Total -	97	80	13	13	-

The number of premises under the Factories Act have increased to 97 from 87 in 1954. This increase is made up of two further premises with mechanical power, and three factories without mechanical power. The other five premises concerned have been included this year because although they are not factories they are offices of Banks and Insurance Companies which are in the district

The informal notices served on one of these offices was for the provision of proper sanitary accommodation to a Bank in Staplehurst, this work has now been completed. Both the notices served for the factories with mechanical power, were for the provision of proper sanitary accommodation. The 10 notices issued to factories without mechanical power include the provision of heating, proper sanitary accommodation, and cleansing, in the case of food premises, and in one case the repair of a floor.

HOUSING.

The following information regarding housing in the Rural District is set out in the form asked for by the Ministry of Health:-

I	1 (a)	Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year. Total number of houses inspected for Housing defects, (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ..	373
	(b)	Number of inspections made for that purpose ..	751
	2 (a)	Number of dwelling-houses, (included under sub-section 1. above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 & 1932	-
	(b)	Number of inspections made for that purpose ..	-
	3 (a)	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	26
	4 (a)	Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	45
II		Remedy of defects during the year, without service of formal notice.	
	1 (a)	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	00
III		Action under Statutory Powers during the Year.	
	A.	Proceedings under Sections 9, 10, & 16 of the Housing Act 1936.	
		1. Number of dwelling-houses in which notices were served requiring repairs	-
		2. Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after the service of formal notices.	
		a. By owners	-
		b. By Local Authority in default of owners ..	-
	B.	Proceedings under Public Health Acts.	
		1. Number of houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	-
		2. Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice	-
		a. By owners.. .. .	-
		b. By Local Authority in default of owners ..	-
	C.	Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act 1936	
		1. Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made.. .. .	3
		2. Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	2

D. Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.

1. Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made -
2. Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined the tenement or room having been rendered fit. -

IV Housing Act, 1936. Part 4 Overcrowding.

- A.
 1. Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year -
 2. Number of families dwelling therein -
 3. Number of persons dwelling therein -
- B.
 1. Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year 8
- C.
 1. Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year 4
 2. Number of persons concerned in such cases 27
- D. Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding .. none

The continued existance of cases of overcrowding is largely the result of the shortage of housing and the necessity for priority in the allocation of houses being given to those who already have children. This results in the situation where young couples who embark of the sea of matrimony have to fall back on the often difficult solution, of coming to share the house of parents or relatives. Some Authorities have attempted to meet this difficulty by reserving a proportion of the new houses completed for the "Newly-weds", but this is a possible source of injustice to others who have been long on the waiting list and whose family is increasing. The real solution will only be found when the supply of houses overtakes the demand.

RURAL HOUSING SURVEY

This Survey was completed in 1947 and now reveals the following figures.

Category 1 houses	1,192
Category 2 houses	1,042
Category 3 houses	1,075
Category 5 houses	144

Category 5 houses have now been included in the Housing Programme for the next five years for Slum Clearance and repair. During 1955, they have been reduced by 10 to 144, this includes the complete repair in three cases, and demolition in the other seven. It had been hoped that properties which have been included in Category 3, i.e. requiring considerable repair, could have been inspected and Housing Act Notices served where the repairs have not been carried out, but owing to the pressure of other work, commencement of this survey has not been made. It is hoped to begin this survey in the near future.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.

During 1955 the Council approved Improvement Grants in 54 cases. The schedule showing the properties and the Parish in which they were situated is included below and shows that in the majority of cases, farm cottages have benefitted by this section of the Housing Act of 1949/55.

The cost to the Council for Grants during this period was £6,090, in my opinion this was money well spent, as it prevented most of the properties concerned from falling into the Category of Slum Clearance. This remark refers mainly to the farm cottage property. With regard to owner/occupied houses, normally the Improvement Grant was for the provision of a Bathroom and necessary fittings where one had not existed before.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

<u>PARISH</u>	<u>FARM COTTAGES</u>	<u>OWNER/OCCUPIED PROPERTY</u>
Barming	2	-
Boughton Monchelsea	-	1
West Farleigh.. ..	4	-
Linton	-	1
Loose	-	1
Marden	10	-
Otham	2	-
Staplehurst	10	2
Yalding	-	1
Total	28	6

Total amount of Grants made in 1955:- £6,090.

CAMPING SITES AND CARAVANS

<u>Site</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Maximum number of caravans</u>
Camping Site, East Farleigh.	Mr. Chambers.	20
Enterprise Site, Barming.	Mr. Coppen.	25
The Retreat, Nettlestead.	Mrs. Lamb.	25

81 inspections.

Summary of Data

Number of inspections	...	...	...	81
Number of licenced sites	...	...	...	3
Applications for licence	...	...	...	1
Applications for licence refused	...	...	...	0

81 inspections were made of Caravan Sites and Caravans during 1955. During the year one application for a Caravan Site Licence was made. This was for a seasonal site in Nettlestead owned by Mr. Ashe of Medway Wharf. It was approved by the Council for seasonal use only. During this year, two sites were approved by the Planning Authority, but were not considered under the Public Health Act because the necessary water supply and sanitation which must be provided before the Public Health Licence can be issued had not been installed.

HOP PICKERS CAMPS

Total Number of Hop Camps in use	...	...	91
Number of Huts in use	...	...	5,331
Estimated Number of Pickers	...	...	20,000

298 inspections.

Hop Picking lasted from the last week in August until the third week in September, and during this period a total number of 298 inspections were made. Each camp was inspected at least once during the period of occupation, it was not found necessary to take any statutory action although 18 informal notices were served.

In comparison with last year, the standard of the camps seemed a little lower, most probably because the number of pickers was less than in 1954. The number of camps used during the year was less because mechanical pickers had been provided and therefore the estimated number of huts in use were 300 less than in 1954.

Section "E"

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

No. of Food Premises in the District.

Cafes and Restaurants	...	...	...	13
Food Shops (excluding Butchers)	...	...	...	84
Butchers' Shops...	...	...	...	18
Licenced Premises	...	...	...	55
Total ..				<u>170</u>

Number of Visits and Inspections.

Cafes and Restaurants	...	...	...	22
Food Shops (excluding Butchers)	...	...	...	117
Butchers' Shops...	...	...	...	17
Licenced Premises	...	...	...	33
Total ..				<u>181</u>

On no occasion during the year was it found necessary to serve a statutory notice or to apply for legal action in the case of controvention of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. 17 Intimation notices were served during the year, and in all cases the work was carried out within a few days of the service of the notice. In addition to the inspections indicated above, 99 visits were made to milk and dairies premises, and 283 for Slaughterhouse and Meat Inspection purposes.

The standard of small village shops still appears to be high, although in some cases adequate hot water facilities were not provided. It is hoped that these facilities will be installed as soon as possible. The standard of cleanliness noticed in the four Bakehouses still operating in the District was not as satisfactory as could be expected, and structural repairs were insisted upon in one case. All work is being completed.

MILK SUPPLIES.

During the year 13 applications for licences to sell specially designated milk in the district were granted by the Council, bringing the total to 58, these included 3 for the sale of Sterilised milk, 5 for the sale of pasteurised milk, and 5 for the sale of Tuberculin Tested milk.

It is pleasant to note that of the 27 samples taken for Bacteriological purposes during 1955, not one sample was found unsatisfactory.

Examination of Milk Samples (Bacteriological)

<u>Grade</u>	<u>No. of Samples examined.</u>		<u>No. found unsatisfactory.</u>
Sterilised	c	16	-
Tuberculin Tested		2	-
Pasteurised		8	-
Undesignated		1	-
Totals		27	-

Dairies and Milk Shops.

Details of registration and licences are given below:-

Dairies registered	19
Retailers (excluding dairies) ..	17
Total ..	36

Dealers Licences.

Sterilised Milk	28
Pasteurised Milk.. ..	15
Tuberculin Tested	15
Total .	<u>58</u>

Supplementary Licences.

Sterilised Milk.. ..	3
Pasteurised Milk	3
Tuberculin Tested Milk	3

INSPECTION OF MEAT

Six privately owned Slaughterhouses are still in operation in the Rural District, and the following table shows the number of carcasses examined, and the results of such examination. The amount of slaughtering done in these six slaughterhouses does not, of course, supply the amount of meat required for consumption in this district, as most of the butchers prefer to purchase meat already slaughtered and dressed from wholesale dealers. With reference to deadweight certification, it will be seen that the number of pigs certified during this period was 127, this was an increase of nearly 100 over 1954. It must be remembered that Deadweight Certification was only allowed to slaughterers in this district for 2 months of the 1954 period.

As can be seen from the statistics of individual slaughterhouses, the amount of slaughtering done in three of the slaughterhouses was negligible. The comparison of the percentage of slaughtered will indicate even more clearly this point.

<u>Slaughterhouse</u>	<u>Carcasses</u>	<u>Per cent.</u>
Haggett	44	3.0
Chambers	11	.7
Ballard	581	39.4
Boorman (Staplehurst)	471	32.0
Boorman (Marden) ..	361	24.5
Standen	6	.4
Totals ..	1,474	100

Total Carcasses Examined

	Pigs	Sheep	Calves	Cows	Other Bovine	Total
No. Examined	649	543	16	9	257	1,474
No. Passed	638	521	16	6	240	1,421
Completely condemned.	1	2	-	-	-	3
Partially condemned	9	17	-	3	17	46

Tuberculosis

	Pigs	Sheep	Calves	Cows	Other Bovine	Total
No Examined	649	543	16	9	257	1,474
Completely condemned.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Partially condemned	-	-	-	2	5	7

Other Diseases

	Pigs	Sheep	Calves	Cows	Other Bovine	Total
No. examined	649	543	16	9	257	1,474
Completely condemned	1	2	-	-	-	3
Partially condemned	9	20	-	1	12	42

Pigs for Deadweight Certification

Boorman (Staplehurst) ..	..	93
Boorman (Marden) ..	..	34
Total.	..	127

SLAUGHTERHOUSES IN DETAIL

<u>Haggett - Hunton</u>	Pigs	Sheep	Cows	Calves	Bovine
Number examined	25	10	9	-	-
Completely condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Partially condemned.	-	-	3	-	-
<u>Chambers - C. Street.</u>	Pigs	Sheep	Cows	Calves	Bovine
Number examined	6	4	-	-	1
Completely condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Partially condemned	-	4	-	-	-
<u>Boorman - Staplehurst</u>	Pigs	Sheep	Cows	Calves	Bovine
Number examined	240	126	-	5	100
Completely condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Partially condemned	1	3	-	-	6
<u>Ballard - Marden.</u>	Pigs	Sheep	Cows	Calves	Bovine
Number examined	196	284	-	10	91
Completely condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Partially condemned.	2	1	-	-	7
<u>Standen - Coxheath.</u>	Pigs	Sheep	Cows	Calves	Bovine
Number examined.	4	-	-	-	-
Completely condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Partially condemned.	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Boorman - Marden.</u>	Pigs	Sheep	Cows	Calves	Bovine
Number examined	178	119	-	1	63
Completely condemned	1	2	-	-	-
Partially condemned.	6	9	-	-	4

REASONS FOR CONDEMNATION

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Completely condemned</u>			<u>Partially condemned</u>
Tuberculosis	-			7
Necrosis	-			11
Abscesses	-			5
Liver Fluke	-			10
Broken Limbs	-			2
Fatty infiltration ..	-			10
Bad bleeding and poor condition	3			-
Cancer	-			1
External bruises ..	-			1
Pleurisy	-			1
Bacterial infection ..	-			1

Other Meat Condemned.

Corned Beef	18 lbs.
Tinned Ham	49 lbs.
Imported Beef	217 lbs.

SHOPS ACTS

The Rural District is now responsible for most of the powers under the Shops Act, these powers being delegated by the County Council. 226 inspections were made during the year, and under this Act it was not found necessary to serve any formal or informal notices. It was not found possible to make any inspection with regard to the closing hours of the shops in this district, owing to the pressure of other work, but it is hoped that such inspections will be made in the future, which will mean a considerable amount of weekend work and work after office hours.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS 1938/50

Formal Samples Taken by Food and Drugs Authorities

This Authority in this District is the County Council, and the Weights and Measures Inspector of the County Council has provided us with a list of the samples taken in the district during the year.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

Food and Drugs Act, 1938-1950

Details of Samples taken by the County Sampling Officers
within the Maidstone Rural District, during the year ended
31st December, 1955

<u>Article</u>	<u>No.</u>
Balsam of Aniseed	1
Butter	2
Buttered Brazils	1
Butterscotch	1
Cane Coffee sugar	1
Chutney	1
Cream Line Toffee	1
Demerara Sugar.. ..	1
Devon Mints made with real butter ..	1
Fynnon Salt	1
Glycerine Lemon and Honey with Ipecacuanha	1
Gin	1
Golden Butter Mints	1
Golden Mints	1
Lard.. ..	1
Lemonade Powder	1
Liquid Paraffin, B.P.	1
Margarine	1
Milk.. ..	31
Orange Flavoured milk drink	1
Roastex	1
Sago.. ..	1
Sauce	1
Shredded Beef Suet	1
Sunny Spread	1
Tea	1
Whisky	1
Zinc Castor Oil and Bensoin Cream ..	1
Total ..	<u>62</u>

SUMMARY

Milks	31
Drugs	6
Spirits.. ..	2
Other Samples	<u>23</u>
	<u>62</u>

All the above samples were genuine with the exception of the following:-

<u>Sample of</u>	<u>Analysis</u>	<u>Remarks.</u>
Golden Butter Mints.	Fat 0.5% (including not more than 0.25% butter)	Manufacturers agreed to amend labels to include the word flavoured.
Channel Islands Pasteurised Milk	8.75% deficient in fat.	Due to improper mixing. Precautionary measures taken by seller to avoid a recurrence.
Pasteurised Milk	3.3% deficient in fat	Retailer interviewed and advised. Further sample to be taken.

ICE CREAM

The number of premises registered for the sale of ice cream has risen from 53 to 57: only one producer still operates in the district and then only in the summer months. His premises have been inspected and found to be satisfactory.

In 1955, 22 samples were taken for bacteriological examination. Of these, one sample was in Group 2, as determined by the Methylene Blue Test, and the remainder were all in Group 1. This result indicates that the standard of ice cream on sale in the district is excellent. This is to be expected, as the bulk of ice cream sold is the product of the large national manufacturers, who are keenly interested in the maintenance of the quality of their products.

Number of samples.	Bacteriological Examinations		Pathogenic organisms Cultivated.
	Methylene Blue Test Group		
21	1	-	
1	2	-	
-	3	-	
-	4	-	

The high standard obtained also indicates that the refrigerating apparatus and equipment used by the retailers is satisfactory. The first indication that the refrigerators were inefficient would be a rise in the bacterial count and a lowered grouping in the Methylene Blue Test.

RODENT CONTROL

Summary of Inspections and Surveys made by the Rodent Operator.

Number of Visits made for all purposes	1,890
Number of Premises surveyed (including farms)	66
Number of Treatments made	827
Estimated number of rats and mice destroyed	
during treatments in 1955	Rats 4,784
	Mice 1,148

The material used in the year has been Warfarin 5, and the base used is maize meal, as it had been found that maize meal lasts longer after laying, especially in the open. The number of treatments in 1955, was less than in 1954, but the number of visits has increased by 478. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the rat population of the district has been reduced - it would be pleasing to think that this was due to the activities of the Rodent Operator, but the adverse weather conditions of 1955 were probably in part responsible.

Annual contracts for the treatment of farms and licenced premises held by the Rural District Council now number 29, and in no case has there been any complaint regarding the services under these contracts.

In addition to the inspections by the Rodent Operator, the Sanitary Inspectors, in course of their duties, made 230 inspections in the year, in connection with rodent infestations and control.

FOOD POISONING

Two cases of food poisoning were notified during the year, and both were single sporadic cases, in which the tracing of the source of infection is difficult. The standard of cleanliness and care in the handling of food in shops and cafes is improving, and the new Regulations should prove a potent weapon in the enforcement of adequate standards of cleanliness. Already, some fish and meat shops provide examples of what can be done to ensure that food is protected from contamination and similar precautions are now to be expected in cafes, stalls and vans where food is sold.

I am glad to note that the St. John Ambulance Association, through the Kent County Centre, is organising courses of instruction for food handlers and these could be attended with advantage by those whose duties in the household are connected with food and its storage and preparation, for it is in the home that risk of contamination of food-stuffs is far too frequent.

Section "F"

Prevalence of, and Control Over, Infectious Disease.

During 1955, whooping-cough, though less frequent than in 1954, showed a heavy incidence, and I find that many of the medical practitioners in the District are complying with the requests of parents that the children should have immunisation. But the heaviest item among the notifications this year was measles, which disease provided 490 cases. The prevalence of Measles was shared by the surrounding districts and indeed through the County, and it would appear that increased incidence of Measles occurs in cycles, when in one or two years most of the children acquire the infection and become protected: then when a fresh crop of non-immune children have been added to the population, the infection re-appears and spreads among these susceptible children until again the bulk of the child population has become immune, and for a time, only a few cases are found each year. Happily there were no deaths recorded from Measles during the year.

Two cases of Polio-myelitis were recorded in the year, but happily there were no fatalities from this cause. Progress has been made in the production of an efficient and safe vaccine for protection against Polio-myelitis and with patient research and increased knowledge, I am hopeful that even more effective means of protection will be found and that this dread disease will be conquered.

Again it is very pleasing to be able to record that there has been no case of Diphtheria in the year. There can be no doubt that the success which has been obtained in the elimination of what used to be a common and often deadly infection, particularly among children, is due to the success of immunisation but only by ensuring that an adequate percentage of the population are immunised and thus protected, can we be sure that Diphtheria will not re-appear. In the following Tables I give the numbers of cases of notifiable disease, which have been recorded in the year 1955. The County Medical Officer has kindly supplied me with figures showing the number of children vaccinated against small-pox in the year, and also the numbers immunised against Diphtheria, classified according to the year of birth. There is also a Table showing the number of children under the age of 15 years on December 31st

1955, who had completed a course of immunisation against Diphtheria at any time before that date. These tables are of interest, but the important point and the one most easily appreciated is that the figure of Diphtheria notifications is again "Nil". To maintain this happy position and to ensure that Diphtheria does not return to the community, it is essential that there should be no neglect of the duty of ensuring that immunisation levels are maintained.

I give below, in tabular form, details of the cases of notifiable diseases, other than Tuberculosis, which occurred in the Rural District during 1955.

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Total cases notified</u>			<u>Total Deaths.</u>
Scarlet Fever	14			nil
Whooping Cough	135			nil
Measles	490			nil
Pneumonia	14			15
Dysentery	11			nil
Erysipelas.. .. .	3			nil
Puerperal Pyrexia ..	4			nil
Acute Polio-myelitis..	2			nil
Food Poisoning	2			nil
Chicken Pox	7			nil
Totals.. .. .	682			15

Immunisation against Diphtheria and
Vaccination against Small Pox, 1955

The following is a return of (A) the number of children resident in the Rural District of Maidstone who were immunised against Diphtheria and (B) the number of persons who were vaccinated against Small Pox, during the year ended 31st December 1955:-

(A) DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

Year of Birth	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	Total
Primary Inoculations	26	150	22	4	4	4	3	1	2	1	1	1				217
Re-inforcing Inoculations	1	1	1	1	1	81	41	7	10	20	3	43	2	1	1	209

(B) VACCINATION

Year of Birth	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	Before 1941	Total.
Primary Vaccination	122	83	1	2	5	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	14	230
Re-Vaccination	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1							1	16	23

Rural District of Maidstone
Immunisation against Diphtheria, 1955

The following is a return of the number of children under the age of 15 years on 31st December, 1955, who had completed a course of immunisation at any time before that date (i.e., at any time since 1st January, 1941).

Year of Birth	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	total
Last complete course of injections (whether primary or booster) 1951 - 1955	38	47	82	137	123	165	181	208	178	252	220	218	203	176	26	2,234
1950 or earlier	95	75	97	96	47	13	8	33	96	10	1	1	1	1	1	570

MALIGNANT DISEASE

The number of deaths from Cancer in the Maidstone Rural District during the past three years is as under:-

1953	..	..	..	..	43
1954	..	..	..	..	53
1955	..	..	..	..	65

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM

(i) Total number of cases notified during
the year Nil

(ii) Number of cases in which:-

(a)	Vision lost	..	..	..	..	-
(b)	Vision impaired	..	..	..	..	-
(c)	Treatment continuing at the end of the year	..	..	..	..	-

TUBERCULOSIS

The following new cases and deaths have been notified during the year.

<u>New cases</u>				<u>Deaths</u>			
<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-pulmonary</u>		<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-pulmonary</u>	
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
6	11	2	Nil	2	Nil	1	Nil
TOTAL - 19				TOTAL - 3			

In the area which includes the Maidstone Rural District, as well as the Borough of Maidstone and the Rural Districts of Malling and Hollingbourn, the Centre for the diagnosis, treatment, and after care of cases of Tuberculosis is situated at Foster Street, Maidstone.

Close co-operation between the Chest Clinic and the Health Departments of the four Authorities has continued during the year and Dr. David Pugh, the Chest Physician for the Mid-Kent area has kindly supplied me with figures of the numbers of "contacts" of known cases of Tuberculosis which were examined during the year, and the number diagnosed as tuberculous. These figures relate to the whole area served by the Chest Clinic.

(a) Number of Contacts seen during 1955, of Newly Notified cases of Tuberculosis	352
(b) Number of Contacts, seen during 1955, of cases notified prior to 1955	360
(c) Number of Contacts in (a) found to be suffering from pulmonary or non-pulmonary Tuberculosis.. ..	6
(d) Number of Contacts in (b) found to be suffering from pulmonary or non-pulmonary Tuberculosis.. ..	5

During 1955, there was no visit of the Mass Radiography Unit to this area, the last such visit being in 1953, but a visit was arranged for the early months of 1956 when a larger number of Centres were available to the Public than in the 1953 visit and preliminary figures which are available indicate that this policy resulted in an increased attendance by the general public, amounting to an increase over the 1953 figures of 5,099. Fuller details will be available later and the results of the 1956 survey included in the Report for that year.

The arrangements at the Chest Clinic for the tracing and following-up of contacts had continued to work with success and in the after-care of Tuberculous patients and their dependants, the Maidstone and District Tuberculosis Care Committee has done much valuable work, and this body, with the more recent organisation, the "Friends of Foster Street" is deserving of the fullest support.

1955

Causes of Deaths.

	M.	F.
All causes	195	172
Tuberculosis, respiratory	2	-
Tuberculosis, other.. .. .	1	-
Syphilitic disease	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-
Whooping Cough	-	-
Meningococcal infections	-	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	-	-
Measles	-	-
Other infective and parasitic disease	-	-
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	3	4
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	12	-
Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	7
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-	3
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasm	23	13
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	-	1
Diabetes	1	2
Vascular lesions of nervous system	29	24
Coronary disease, agina	19	8
Hypertension with heart disease	1	5
Other heart disease	19	28
Other circulatory disease	6	7
Influenza	1	1
Pneumonia	7	8
Bronchitis	9	6
Other disease of respiratory system	-	-
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum.. .. .	5	-
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	1	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	2	2
Hyperplasia of prostate	-	-
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-	-
Congenital malformations	-	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	42	42
Motor vehicle accidents	4	1
All other accidents	7	3
Suicide	1	3
Homicide and operations of war	-	-

Birth-rates, Death-rates, and Analysis of Mortality in the year 1955.

Rate per 1,000 live births		Annual Death-rate per 1,000 population										Rate per 1,000 live births.
Live births		Still birth	All causes	Typhoid & para ty- phoid fever	Tuber- culosis	Whooping Cough	Diph- theria	Influenza	Polio- myelitis (including polioence- phelitis)	Pneumonia	Smallpox	Total Deaths under 1 year.
England & Wales.	15.0	23.2	11.7	0.00	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.01	0.49	0.00	24.9
160 County Boroughs & Great Towns including London.	14.9	23.2	11.6	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.01	0.53	0.00	25.1
160 smaller Towns (resi- dent popula- tion 25,000 - 50,000 at 1951 Census)	14.9	23.3	11.6	0.00	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.45	0.00	25.2
London Ad- ministrative County	15.1	20.2	11.5	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.01	0.63	0.00	23.2
Maidstone Rural Dis- trict.	15.76	14.23	15.37	0.00	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.80	0.00	32.49

Maternal Mortality in England and Wales.

<u>Cause</u>	<u>No. of Deaths</u>	<u>Rates per 1,000 total of Births (live & still)</u>
Maternal causes	438	0.57

Maidstone Rural District

<u>Puerperal Infections</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Total</u>
Nil	Nil	Nil per 1,000 Total Births.

GENERAL SUMMARY

Estimated Resident Population, 1955	..	..	18,620
Area (acres)	..	..	34,487
Density (persons per acre)	..	..	0.539
Annual Birth-rate per 1,000 population:-					
	Crude	..	14.87		
	Corrected	..	15.76		
Annual Death-rate per 1,000 population:-					
	Crude	..	19.71		
	Corrected	..	15.37		
Births	Male	126	Female 151	Total	277
Deaths	Male	195	Female 172	Total	367
Excess of deaths over births					90
Tuberculosis death-rate					
	Pulmonary				.107
	Non-pulmonary				.055
Cancer death-rate per 1,000 population					3.49

